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vigorous reasoning powers. As a sketch of the Mexico of the present day it is unsurpassed, and, so far as we know, unapproached. As an exponent of the political, social, and religious horoscope of the Mexican people, the writer commands our assured confidence. As an historical critic he is bold and searching, and in the collation of testimonies with one another and with circumstantial evidences, he reminds us of the scientific scepticism of Niebuhr. He certainly demonstrates Cortez to have been as much of a braggart as a ruffian, and, by adroit cross-examination, convicts Bernal Diaz of gross mendacity. He shows little favor to Romanism, and is by no means slow in ascribing the depressed condition and retrograde tendencies of Mexican affairs to the agency of this baptized polytheism. We cannot here accuse him of prejudice. His conclusions have their more than ample basis of observed and unquestionable fact. In the Spanish American states, as nowhere else upon earth, can we study the intrinsic character and inevitable influence of the Romish doctrine and hierarchy. Here alone Protestantism has no latent hold and unacknowledged power. Here alone can the priesthood shut the floodgates so close, that the tide of advancing culture can find no sluice-way for admission. We admire our author's unscrupulous honesty in assigning to effects their only legitimate causes, and deem it immeasurably more the Christian part to lay bare, than to cloak under softened phrases, the outrages systematically perpetrated in the name of Christianity on its substance and its spirit.

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15. — *Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands.* By MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY. Third Edition. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1856. 16mo. pp. 395.

It is a good sign, literary and moral, that a third edition of this book is called for. It is more than we should have expected for a work which has absolutely nothing in it that is intense, or odd, or paradoxical, nay, which has no salient points whatever. *No salient points*, we say, and in so saying we describe what is not necessarily a merit or a fault; for the prominences thus designated may be either outcroppings of genius or forthputtings of pretentious mediocrity, while the absence of them may denote either the extreme of emptiness and platitude, or that of fulness, grace, and artistical beauty. In Mrs. Sigourney it denotes the latter. Of the numerous poems in verse and poems in prose that make up this volume, we should not know how to select one or a few for special praise, nor is there one with which we should be willing to part. The pieces taken collectively are a poet's journal of a tour in Great

Britain and France, with the memorabilia of the outward and homeward passage. The successive centres of peculiar interest furnish the titles, and a portion of the material, for the successive sketches and reveries. Easy narrative, graphic description, vivid yet chastened fancy, and devotion equally mild and fervent, blend and alternate throughout, constituting a cluster of gems, each with its own individual lustre, and all of them possessing, not a superficial glitter, but a brilliancy which, like that of pure crystal, shines through the entire substance. The work is enhanced in value from its being manifestly the genuine record of heart-experiences, and that so completely that we can conceive of its being written, all of it, with no expectation of its ever leaving the writer's desk. But we are thankful that it was not left there; for her thoughts suggest reflections and kindle emotions that can hardly fail to make her readers wiser and better.

One closing word as to the title of this book. Mrs. Stowe chose for her admirable record of travel almost the same title. We cannot for a moment impute to her the paltry plagiarism, of which no one could stand less in need. But Mrs. Sigourney's work was first before the public, and the felicity of the title is hers by prior right.

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16. — *Glances and Glimpses; or Fifty Years' Social, including Twenty Years' Professional Life.* By HARRIOT K. HUNT, M. D. Boston: John P. Jewett & Co. 1856. 12mo. pp. 418.

If for nothing else, for its domestic sketches this book deserves to be generally read. There were types of home life, now obsolete, but as yet unimpaired in the childhood and youth of persons of Miss Hunt's age, which deserve to be studied now, and passed down to posterity, for their picturesqueness and their moral beauty. Fifty years ago, each family preserved its own individuality intact. The household hearth not only *was*, (would that it had never been superseded!) but was all that is implied in its Latin synonyme, *focus*, the centre of interest and affection, the radiating point of all sympathies and all charities. Miss Hunt was born in Boston,—a *North-End*er of the fourth generation. Her father was first a substantial ship-joiner; in after years his little patrimony, increased by a wise, not niggardly frugality, was invested in navigation. Her early home was one of those spacious frame-houses, with flower-plats in front and gardens in the rear, which till of late gave an air of comfort and of quaint respectability to that section of the city, but which have now almost all yielded place to brick structures of normal narrowness, or linger dilapidated wrecks of their former selves.